



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAY 31 2012

OFFICE OF  
ENFORCEMENT AND  
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

Jill Lewandowski  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management  
(MS 4042)  
381 Elden Street  
Herndon, VA 20170-4817

Dear Ms. Lewandowski:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Proposed Geological and Geophysical Activities for the Mid-Atlantic and South Atlantic Planning Areas (CEQ No. 20120094).

The draft PEIS evaluates the types of geological and geophysical (G&G) surveys and activities on the Atlantic OCS during the 2012-2020 period in three program areas managed by BOEM: oil and gas exploration and production; renewable energy; and marine minerals. The purpose of the proposed action is to gather state-of-the-practice data about the ocean bottom and subsurface. These data would provide information about the location and extent of oil and gas reserves, seafloor conditions for oil and gas or renewable energy installations, and marine minerals deposits off the U.S. Atlantic Coast. In addition to the No Action alternative, BOEM evaluated two alternatives (Alternatives A and B) with respect to the G&G activities that could be conducted which differ only with respect to certain mitigation measures.

EPA believes that the draft PEIS provides an adequate discussion of the potential environmental impacts and we have not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes. Since a preferred alternative was not identified in the draft PEIS, we are rating both alternatives as LO – "Lack of Objections." A summary of EPA's rating is attached.

We appreciate the opportunity to review the draft EIS and look forward to reviewing the final PEIS related to this project. The staff contact for the review is Candi Schaedle and she can be reached at (202) 564-6121.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan E. Bromm".

Susan E. Bromm  
Director  
Office of Federal Activities

Attachment